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ELLERY QUEEN™

THE ENGLISH CHANNELER MYSTERY

By
Mike W. Barr
Adam T. Hughes
Rick Magyar

CELEBRATING THE 60th ANNIVERSARY OF ELLERY QUEEN!

KILLER SPREE OF THE LESBIAN BIKER NUNS

By
Gabriel Webb

INNOVATION™

Detection And Other Arts

October and November are turning out to be meaningful months at the Innovation offices. More and more, we're gearing our line toward titles I would buy off the stands, no matter *who* was publishing them.

THE MAZE AGENCY is, of course, a prime example -- with this month being the 60th anniversary of Ellery Queen. And it took Mike Barr, with his justifiable appreciation of the character, to breathe new life into Queen with the first new Ellery Queen story in 14 years! I found it to be a real corker of a story, and Adam Hughes and Rick Magyar turned in their best art job to date! Thanks, guys.

Adam and Rick have another art job in the works -- and you'll see it in issue **#12**, entitled "Murderer's Mask."

Anne Rice's THE VAMPIRE LESTAT has premiered, and the result is lovely...*if* that's an appropriate word to describe a best-selling gothic/modern horror story. Faithfully adapted by Faye Perozich, gloriously painted by Daerick Gross. We're just stunned by the quality of the work on upcoming issues as it arrives at the office.

We've just wrapped sending the second issue of ***CYBERPUNK*** to the color separator. Darryl Banks has knocked himself out painting each and every page of this jarring story. It's seemed like months since the first issue came in -- in fact, it *has* been months -- but I'm confident you'll find the result worth the wait. Author Scott Rockwell is busily writing a second ***CYBERPUNK*** two-parter, but we're waiting to hear how you like this one before we venture further.

A sideways venture into the realm of cyberpunk is ***SERAPHIM***, a three-issue fully-painted mini-series project we're working on right now for release next year. Chris Todd writes it, Doug Tallala paints it; you haven't heard of either of these guys, but the work speaks for itself. "Wow" comes to mind.

EAST MEETS WEST will be on the stands right after the first of the year. If you've seen *Predator*, or *Top Gun*, or *RoboCop*, then you've seen the storyboarding power of Paul S. Power, the writer and artist of this wild and wooly project. With a little help from his friends Dave Stevens, Nestor Redondo, Steve Leialoha, and others, this writer/artist from down under brings us, in the words of the legendary Steranko, "a visual riot of surprises, bizarre characters, and action, action, action! Don't miss it!" Good words -- and obviously, I agree with them.

NEWSTRALIA, as of issue **#3** on sale this month, finally clicks into the book I've *wanted* it to be -- rousing adventure with the best art the title has seen yet...an action cover from Tim Truman and incredible interiors from John Hebert and Mike Witherby.

LEGENDS OF THE STARGRAZERS #4 and **#5** have been coming through the office, and I'm as thrilled with the art on these as I am with ***HERO ALLIANCE #5***, which boasts a wonderful Kris cover by Ron Lim and terrific art by Mark Jones; ***ALLIANCE***'ll be out before Christmas, and ***STARGRAZERS*** will hit for Thanksgiving and Christmas, respectively.

That's only some of what's cooking at the office, but you get the idea!

-- David Campiti

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the MAZE® AGENCY Joins forces with ELLERY QUEEN™

...TO STALK A KILLER WHO MOVES ACROSS SAND WITHOUT A TRACE, WHO KILLS WITHOUT A CLUE -- AND WHO HAS BEEN DEAD FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS!

The ENGLISH CHANNELER Mystery

A·Problem·In·Deduction

MIKE W. BARR *Writer* ADAM HUGHES *Penciller* RICK MAGYAR *Inker*
ADDIS & WILLIAMS *Letterers* THE VANHOOK STUDIOS *Colorists*
DAVID CAMPITI *Editor*

JEN'S BIRTHDAY IS THIS WEEK, LACEY; I COULD USE A GOOD IDEA FOR A GIFT.
Little Botique
THAT'S THE TROUBLE, GABE! THE BEST GIFT IS SOMETHING PERSONAL--SOMETHING YOU CHOOSE YOURSELF.
SHE'D LIKE A COMPACT DISK OF HER FAVORITE COMPOSER...
TOWER RECORD
CLASSICAL
HOLST THE PLANETS
JOHN WILLIAMS THE BOSTON POPS
THAT'S A NICE GIFT, BUT IT'S NOT VERY PERSONAL...
Victoria's Secret
HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
THAT MAY BE A LITTLE TOO PERSONAL...!
MAYBE SOME CHOCOLATE?
Chocolate Fantastique
THAT'S A START. HEAVEN KNOWS, SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HER FIGURE...
SIGH... I HOPE I LOOK AS GOOD AS SHE DOES WHEN I'M THIRTY-FIVE...
THIRTY-FIVE?
JEN'S GONNA BE THIRTY-FIVE? SHE'S TWO YEARS OLDER THAN I AM! I DIDN'T KNOW THAT..!
I DON'T THINK SHE WANTED YOU TO KNOW, EITHER!
OH, GOLLY...

"AND NOW TO INTRODUCE OUR SPEAKER, THE FOUNDER OF THE RUNE CENTER, DR. ANTONY RUNE."
RUNE CENTER for the NEW AGE
"THANK YOU, HOLLIS. OUR SPEAKER TONIGHT APTLY DEMONSTRATES THE CENTRAL TENET OF MY CREED, HONORED GUESTS,..
I HAVE YOUR BOW AND ARROWS HERE, ANTONY.
...THAT THIS MODERN AGE HAS NOTHING TO TEACH US; THAT ALL MAN'S "WISDOM" AND "SCIENCE" ARE AS NOTHING BEFORE THE WONDERS OF AGES PAST.
VERY GOOD, ARIEL...
"THE MODERN MAN, FOR EXAMPLE, IF TOLD TO STRIKE THE BULL'S EYES OF THESE TARGETS, HELD BY MY SON HOLLIS, WOULD WORRY ABOUT HIS AIM...
...LIKE SOME LATTER-DAY WILLIAM TELL. HOWEVER, MY MIND, MY SENSES, MY AIM MAY DECEIVE ME.
"I THEREFORE DO NOT AIM...
TWANNANNG
WHUPT
WHUPT

I SIMPLY SHOOT.
PLEASE, NO APPLAUSE. I AM ONLY THE CONDUIT THROUGH WHICH THESE FORCES FLOW.
NOW I INTRODUCE ONE WHO MAY PUT YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE FORCES OF ANOTHER AGE. MY WIFE, LADY ASHCROFT, MARGARET CHALMERS-RUNE.
I, LIKE MY HUSBAND, DO NOT DESERVE YOUR PLAUDITS, AND ACCEPT THEM ONLY IN THE NAME OF HE WHOSE SPIRIT I CHANNEL, NORAGA.
HIS BODY DIED ONE HUNDRED CENTURIES AGO, WHEN THE SEAS SWALLOWED ATLANTIS...
...BUT HIS SPIRIT SPEAKS TO THIS FAITHLESS AGE, THROUGH ME. THESE CLOTHES ARE LIKE THE CLOTHES HE WORE, DURING HIS LIFE.
I SENSE HIS APPROACH! BE SILENT NOW, AND YOU MAY HEAR HIM SPEAK WITH MY TONGUE...
YOU ARE CORRECT IN DESCRIBING YOUR AGE AS FAITHLESS, MARGARET. EVEN NOW, TREACHERY AND BETRAYAL ABOUND.
THERE IS DANGER. I KNOW THAT, THOUGH I DO NOT KNOW ITS SOURCE, NOR THE PATH IT SHALL TAKE.

"BEWARE THOSE WHO WOULD DECEITFULLY USE YOU, MARGARET, AND DILUTE MY PURPOSE. CHASTISEMENT IS NOT MY WAY...
"...BUT THOSE WHO CORRUPT MY PURPOSES FOR THEIR OWN MUST BE PUNISHED, AND SOON."
WAS HE HERE, TONY? DID HE SPEAK?
YES, MOTHER. HERE, YOU MUST BE THIRSTY..
AFTER MARGARET HAS RESTED, WE MAY PERSUADE HER TO ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS AS TO THE TECHNIQUES OF CHANNELING--
"AND DID AN ANALYSIS OF THE WATER REVEAL ANYTHING, DR. RUNE?"
"THE POLICE OFFICIAL--A LIEUTENANT BLISS--WAS SINGULARLY UNCOMMUNICATIVE, MR. QUEEN...
MARGARET?
THE ITALIAN VILLAGE MYSTERY by Ellery Queen
...BUT SHE FINALLY DISCLOSED THAT THE WATER MY WIFE DRANK WAS CONTAMINATED BY AN OVERDOSE OF A MEDICYNE TAKEN BY MY SON, ANTONY JUNIOR.
HERE IT IS..!

DO YOU WANT ME TO INVESTIGATE THIS ATTEMPT ON HER LIFE, DR. RUNE?
I'M A WRITER, YOU KNOW; NOT A PRIVATE DETECTIVE.
TECHNICALLY, NO. BUT YOUR STATUS AS AN INVESTIGATOR IS WELL-KNOWN.
AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ALL THIS, TONY?
M-ME, MR. QUEEN...?
"ANGRY, I GUESS...THAT SOMEONE USED MY MEDICINE TO POISON MOM."
"YES, LET YOUR FEELINGS OUT, SON..."
"IS THERE ANYONE ELSE EITHER OF YOU SUSPECT?"
"ONLY TWO OTHERS HAD OPPORTUNITY TO POISON THE WATER, MR. QUEEN. MY SON, HOLLIS, FROM MY FIRST MARRIAGE. AND MARGARET'S DAUGHTER, ARIEL CHAMBERS, FROM HER FIRST MARRIAGE."
I'LL TAKE THE CASE, DR. RUNE--ON ONE CONDITION.
IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THE...er...COARSER ASPECTS OF OUR ASSOCIATION, MR. QUEEN, I ASSURE YOU I CAN PAY--
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT, DR. RUNE...
SIGH I JUST BE SURE YOU DON'T TELL MY PUBLISHER.
TUESDAY AUG 1989

INSPECTOR RICHARD QUEEN
HOMICIDE
"IS THIS ALL YOU'VE GOT ON THE RUNE CASE, DAD?"
"'IS THIS ALL?' IT'S NOT EVEN A HOMICIDE, SON."
NOT THIS TIME. THE LAB REPORT SAYS THE CONCENTRATION OF POISON IN THE GLASS WAS ONE HUNDRED PARTS PER THOUSAND... AND THE CONCENTRATION OF POISON IN THE PITCHER WAS FIFTY PARTS PER THOUSAND.
WHY SO INTERESTED, EL? DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE GONE "NEW AGE" ON ME!
NOT WHILE THIS AGE--AND ITS CRIMES--ARE SO INTRIGUING. SEE YOU LATER, DAD.
"INTRIGUING?" WHAT DID YOU SEE IN THAT REPORT?
ELLERY...!
MORNING, SERGEANT VELIE. I HOPE THAT BOOK'S ONE OF MINE.
SORRY, MAESTRO...
...BUT THIS GUY'S ALL THE RAGE NOW. MY WIFE'S EVEN BUYIN' HIS CRYSTALS.
I HOPE THEY CAN BE MADE INTO A VERY NICE NECKLACE.
LIVING A NO-FAULT LIFE
DR. ANTONY

"WELL, WHOM DO YOU SUSPECT OF POISONING YOUR MOTHER'S WATER, MS. CHALMERS?"
"IT WAS NEITHER HOLLIS NOR MYSELF, MISS MAYS..."
...BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE IT WAS FATHER OR TONY EITHER.
THAT RATHER ELIMINATES THE LIST OF SUSPECTS.
AS A PROFESSIONAL ASTROLOGER, MISS MAYS, I CAN TELL YOU IT'S WRONG FOR THEIR CHARACTERS. IT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO THINK OF ONE OF YOUR FAMILY AS A KILLER.
OF COURSE IT IS, MS. CHALMERS. PERHAPS IF I WERE TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS...
KRASH
MR. RUNE, ARE YOU--
"ALL RIGHT?" HARDLY, MISS MAYS...
MOTHER WILL BE HOME TONIGHT, MISS MAYS, WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER ABOUT SEVEN?
THIS DEGENERATIVE NERVE DISEASE I SUFFER FROM BECOMES MORE OF A CROSS TO BEAR DAILY. I'VE ALREADY HAD TO LEAVE MY BALLET COMPANY.
I'M SORRY...
"THANK YOU. I WILL. AND I'LL BE BRINGING AN ASSOCIATE.

COME IN, MISS MAYS; YOU'RE EXPECTED.
THANK YOU.
JEN, LOOK! THAT'S ELLERY QUEEN!
JUST WHAT I NEED; MORE COMPETITION.
HE DOESN'T INVESTIGATE FOR THE MONEY, BABE. GUYS LIKE US ARE INTRIGUED BY THE NATURE OF THE CRIME.
"US"...?
MR. QUEEN, I'VE SEEN YOU AT SOME MEETINGS OF THE MYSTERY LEAGUE. MY NAME'S GABRIEL WEBB.
YES, I REMEMBER YOU, WEBB. PLEASE, CALL ME ELLERY.
I READ YOUR ARTICLE ON THE "RIPPER" CASE; A NICE PIECE OF WORK.
I'M JENNIFER MAYS, MR. QUEEN--
THANKS, EL.
OF THE MAZE AGENCY?
ELLERY.
THAT'S RIGHT. HOW DO YOU KNOW OF MAZE, MR. QUEEN?

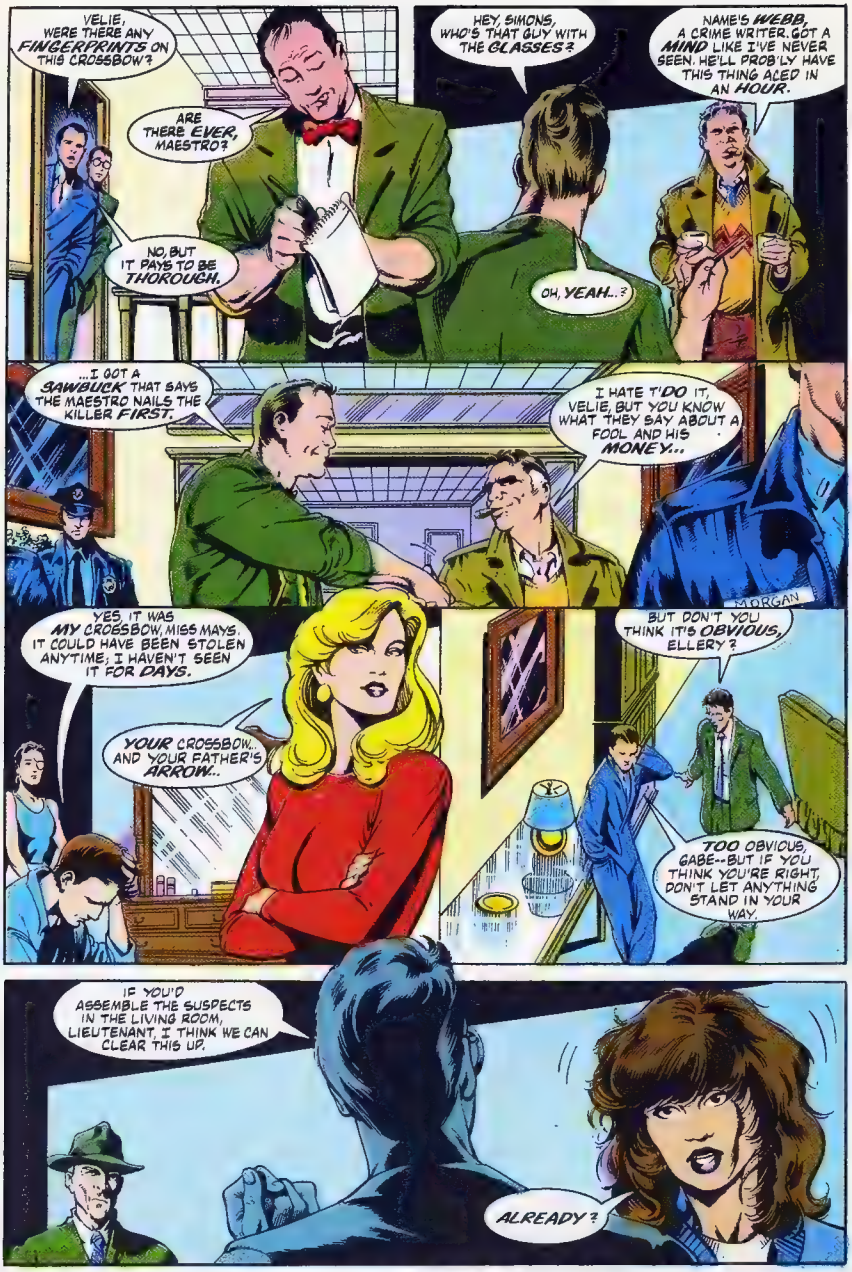
MY FATHER, INSPECTOR QUEEN, HAS TOLD ME ABOUT SOME OF YOUR CASES--I THINK HIS SOURCE IS LIEUTENANT BLISS.
YES, I'M SURE SHE'D HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO SAY ABOUT MAZE...
"MISS MAYS..?"
...I'M AFRAID ARIEL AND I ARE RUNNING A LITTLE LATE; WE'RE JUST FINISHING UP WITH OUR EXERCISES.
THAT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, MR. RUNE.
IS THAT YOU, MISS MAYS? WITH YOU IN A MOMENT.
LOOKS LIKE A REMAKE OF KUNG FU.
HUSH.
GOOD JOB, ARIEL, NOT A MARK. YOU WOULD HAVE MADE A GREAT DANCER.
COMING FROM YOU, THAT'S HIGH PRAISE. YOUR TURN, NOW.
GOOD, BUT MORE BOUNCE. AND KEEP THOSE TOES POINTED.

YOU MUST BE MR. WEBB. YOUR REMARK ABOUT KUNG FU ISN'T FAR OFF.
YOU HEARD THAT?
THAT'S THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THE BLINDFOLD; TO HEIGHTEN MY OTHER SENSES. I LOST MY LEFT EYE IN A SHOOTING ACCIDENT YEARS AGO.
IS THAT WHY YOU CALL YOUR ASTROLOGY COMPANY "LIBRA"?
EXACTLY, LIBRA, OF COURSE, WAS TOTALLY BLIND. BUT I THOUGHT I MIGHT AS WELL TURN A DISADVANTAGE INTO A MARKETING PLUS--
WHUMP
HOLLIS!
I'VE WARNED YOU AGAINST TRYING THOSE LEAPS, HAVEN'T I?
BUT I COULD FEEL IT FOR A MOMENT, ARIEL! I WAS IN CONTROL AGAIN! DAD'S RIGHT-- I CAN BEAT THIS THING!
I TAKE IT YOU'RE TRYING TO USE DR. RUNE'S HOLISTIC TECHNIQUES TO CURE YOURSELF?
WELL, THE DOCTORS HAVE CERTAINLY GIVEN UP ON ME.

ONCE WE'VE GOTTEN CLEANED UP, WE'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO MOTHER.
WE MAY HAVE TO TAKE A NUMBER...
MOTHER, HOLLIS AND I HAVE HIRED A DETECTIVE TO--
ANOTHER? WITH THE PRESENCE OF MR. QUEEN, WE SEEM TO HAVE AN EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES.
THIS IS VERY THOUGHTFUL OF ALL OF YOU, BUT IT'S QUITE UNNECESSARY. THIS "POISONING" ATTEMPT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT.
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN NORAGA'S WARNING, MARGARET? "THERE IS DANGER."
NORAGA HAS BEEN QUITE SILENT ON THE SUBJECT EVER SINCE, ANTONY. PERHAPS HE'S TOO SHAMEFACED TO ADMIT HE'S WRONG.
IT IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO FEEL THREATENED HERE...
...IN THIS ABODE I HAVE PREPARED FOR MY PERSONAL MEDITATIONS.
THE SANDS HERE ARE LIKE THOSE OF ANCIENT ATLANTIS. THIS MILIEU FACILITATES COMMUNICATION WITH NORAGA...

...AND IT'S CALMING INFLUENCE MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE ANY WOULD WISH TO HARM ME.
"THERE ARE MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH," MRS. RUNE.
THAN ARE DREAMT OF IN MY PHILOSOPHY, MR. QUEEN? I'M CERTAIN OF THAT, AND I LOOK FORWARD TO LEARNING THEM--
--BUT THE ACCEPTANCE THAT ONE OF MY LOVED ONES MAY WISH ME HARM IS NOT AMONG THEM. GOOD NIGHT.
WHAT--?
TWANG
DOWN!
WHUNKT!
AGGGH--

"...AND HE WAS KILLED INSTANTLY, BOBBIE?"
"THAT'S WHAT DR. POST SAYS, INSPECTOR...
...AND LOOKING AT THIS ARROW, I WOULDN'T DOUBT IT.
THIS HAS GONE BEYOND MURDER ATTEMPTS, THAT'S FOR SURE!
"PARDON ME, INSPECTOR...
...BUT MY WIFE WOULD SLEEP MORE CALMLY IF SHE KNEW YOU WERE MAKING ANY PROGRESS IN YOUR INVESTIGATION.
LIEUTENANT BLISS IS IN CHARGE, DR. RUNE-- I'M JUST STICKING MY TWO CENTS IN.
YOU'LL KNOW SOMETHING AS SOON AS WE DO, SIR.
LOOKS LIKE DR. RUNE'S FINALLY REALIZED THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS "NO-FAULT" MURDER.
GABE, NOT NOW...
THIS IS THE DEADLIEST KIND OF MURDER DEVICE--LETHAL BUT SIMPLE...
"... THE KILLER WEDGED IT INTO PLACE, THEN TIED A WIRE FROM THE TRIGGER TO THE DOORKNOB. FOOLPROOF... EXCEPT FOR ONE DETAIL...


VELIE, WERE THERE ANY FINGERPRINTS ON THIS CROSSBOW?
ARE THERE EVER, MAESTRO?
NO, BUT IT PAYS TO BE THOROUGH.
HEY, SIMONS, WHO'S THAT GUY WITH THE GLASSES?
OH, YEAH...?
NAME'S WEBB, A CRIME WRITER. GOT A MIND LIKE I'VE NEVER SEEN. HE'LL PROB'LY HAVE THIS THING ALED IN AN HOUR.
I GOT A SAWBUCK THAT SAYS THE MAESTRO NAILS THE KILLER FIRST.
I HATE T'DO IT, VELIE, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT A FOOL AND HIS MONEY...
MORGAN
YES, IT WAS MY CROSSBOW, MISS MAYS. IT COULD HAVE BEEN STOLEN ANYTIME; I HAVEN'T SEEN IT FOR DAYS.
YOUR CROSSBOW... AND YOUR FATHER'S ARROW...
BUT DON'T YOU THINK IT'S OBVIOUS, ELLERY?
TOO OBVIOUS, GABE--BUT IF YOU THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, DON'T LET ANYTHING STAND IN YOUR WAY.
IF YOU'D ASSEMBLE THE SUSPECTS IN THE LIVING ROOM, LIEUTENANT, I THINK WE CAN CLEAR THIS UP.
ALREADY?

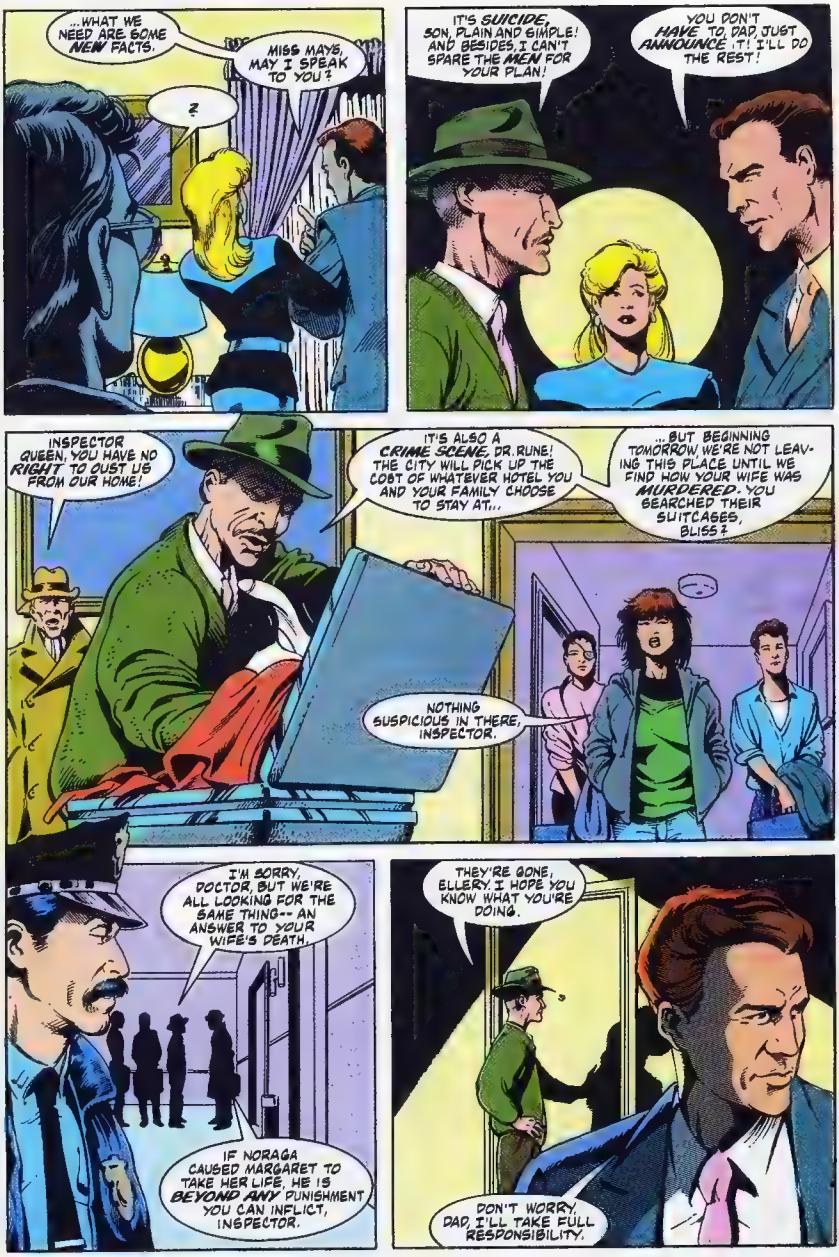
THE MURDER OF TONY RUNE, JR. IS SIMPLE AS GRAVITY, ONCE YOU REALIZE HIS DEATH WAS JUST A BY-PRODUCT--AN ACCIDENT.
DON'T TELL ME HE'S SOLVED THIS CASE AND YOU HAVEN'T!
CALM DOWN, DAD; I WANT TO HEAR THIS.
YOU PLANTED THAT CROSSBOW, MRS. RUNE! AND YOU POISONED THAT WATER YOU DRANK, TOO! I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT--
LEAVE MY HOUSE, YOUNG MAN!
NO!
INSTEAD OF ASKING, "WHO PLANTED THE CROSSBOW?" ASK, "WHO PLANTED THE CROSSBOW SO IT WOULD FIRE AT SUCH A HIGH ANGLE?"
THE ARROW WENT RIGHT OVER MRS. RUNE'S HEAD! SHE WAS NEVER IN ANY DANGER!
NO PROBLEM, DOC! YOUR BUSINESS IS WITH THE POLICE NOW, ANYWAY!
LIEUTENANT, YOU CANNOT BELIEVE THAT MAN'S IMAGININGS--!
YOU CAN'T DENY HE MADE SOME SENSE, DOCTOR.
WHY DON'T WE LET THIS SETTLE FOR A WHILE? I SUGGEST WE DISCUSS THIS AGAIN...

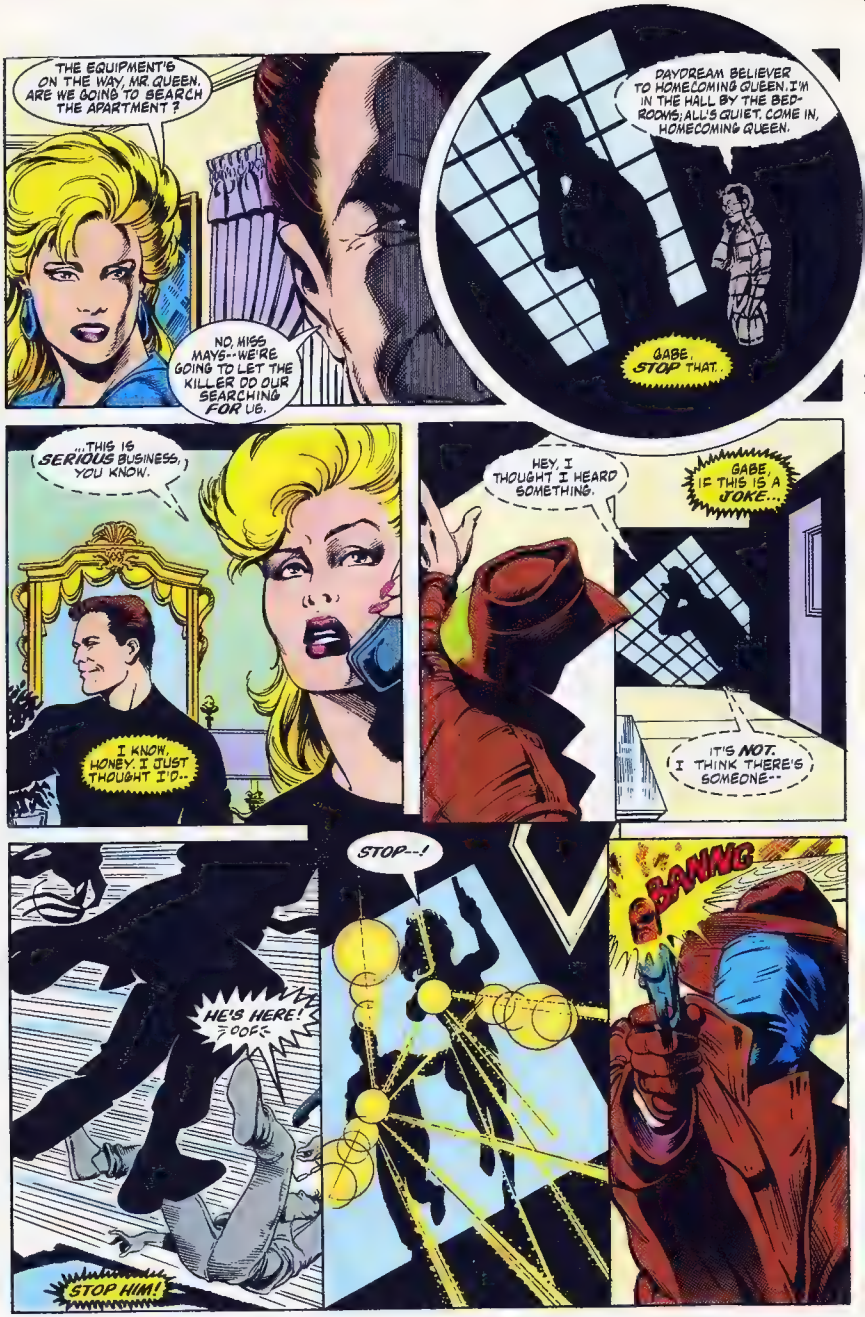
"...TOMORROW NIGHT."
MOTHER? THE POLICE ARE HERE.
I SUPPOSE SHE'S MEDITATING; SHE'S BEEN QUITE DISTURBED LATELY.
AT LEAST THE RAIN FINALLY STOPPED..
SIMONS! GET MAYS AND WEBB OVER HERE!
Margaret Chalmers-Rune is a murderer, and unworthy to channel my spirit. I am compelling her to take her own life.
Noraga
=GASP= MOTHER?
VELIE! CALL ELLERY!
GABE, THIS MUSIC BOX IS LOVELY. THIS IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE PIECES BY PACHELBEL.
AND DON'T FORGET THIS.

OH, MY. DID YOU PICK THIS OUT YOURSELF?
UH-HUH. I WANTED TO GET YOU SOMETHING SPECIAL. IT'S NOT EVERY DAY A WOMAN TURNS THIRTY-FIVE.
AND HOW DID YOU FIND OUT I WAS THIRTY-FIVE?
I'LL NEVER TELL.
WE'LL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT.
BRINNNNG
SORRY TO BRING YOU OUT, EL. I THOUGHT IT WAS ANOTHER MURDER, BUT IT'S SUICIDE-- CAN'T BE ANYTHING ELSE.
WHY NOT, DAD?
SEE FOR YOURSELF. HER FAMILY CONFIRMS MRS. RUNE WENT TO HER TENT BEFORE IT BEGAN RAINING, AND SHE'S BEEN DEAD JUST A FEW MINUTES.
AND?
THE SAND WAS UNMARKED BEFORE WE GOT HERE! NO ONE COULD HAVE FAKED THE MOTTLING. DONE BY THE RAIN, OR LEAPT THIRTY FEET TO SHOOT HER! IT'S OPEN-AND-SHUT!
PERHAPS... WHAT DOES THE LAB SAY?

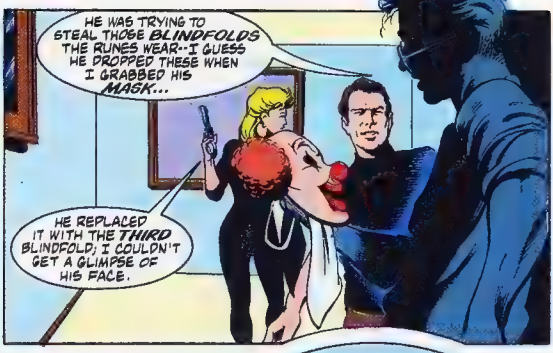
VELIE?
NOTHIN' BUT SMUDGES ON THE GUN BUTT, INSPECTOR. BUT THE TYPIN' ON THE NOTE MATCHED HER TYPEWRITER. BALLISTICS SAYS THE BULLET CAME FROM HER GUN...
...POWDER RESIDUE ON HER GLOVES SHOWS SHE FIRED THE SHOT AND A POWDER BURN ON HER HELMET INDICATES THE SHOT WAS FIRED POINT BLANK.
WELL, SON?
I'LL LET YOU KNOW.
DR. RUNE, WE'RE VERY SORRY...
I SHOULD HOPE YOU WOULD BE, MISS MAYS.
T CROSS
WHAT'S THE DEAL HERE, ELLERY? WAS MY SOLUTION WRONG?
THAT SEEMS TO DEPEND ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS SUICIDE, GABE. IT LOOKS GENUINE, BUT SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT...
YOU'VE SEEN SOMETHING?
NO, NO NOTHING LIKE THAT...JUST A FEELING I HAVE. THOSE CAN BE AS IMPORTANT AS EVIDENCE.
CE - DO NOT CROSS

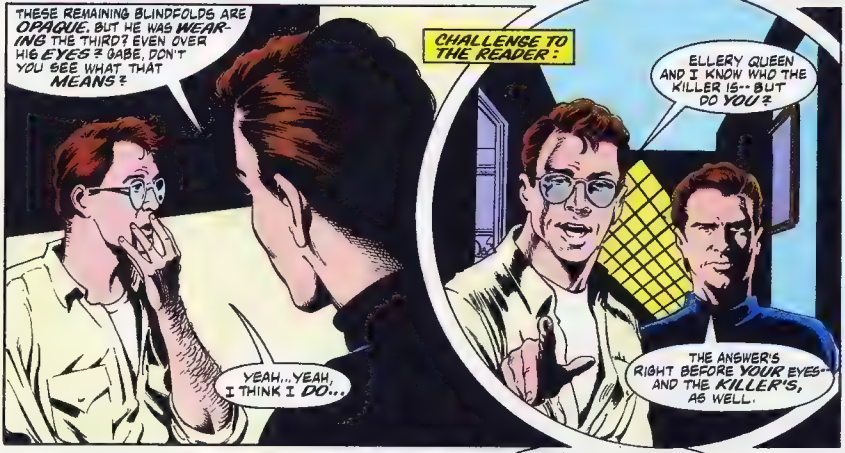
WE HEARD NO SHOTS, LIEUTENANT BLISS...WE WERE SCATTERED ALL AROUND THE APARTMENT.
AND NONE OF YOU CAN ALIBI EACH OTHER, EH?
ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT WE HAD SOME PART IN THIS--?
ARIEL, PLEASE...
YOU'RE GOING TO LIKE THIS QUESTION EVEN LESS. DR. RUNE, DID YOUR WIFE EXHIBIT ANY SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL INSTABILITY?
SOME SAY ALL WHO LOOK BEYOND THIS WORLD ARE MAD, BUT HER CHANNELING ABILITIES WERE GENUINE. HOWEVER, I DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HER NOTE.
SHE WASN'T MAD, AND SHE DIDN'T KILL TONY, EITHER! SHE WAS A TRANQUIL, PACIFIC PERSON! IT WAS IN HER STARS! WE ALL LOVED HER!
ARIEL, THIS ISN'T DOING ANY GOOD...
SHE LOVED THEM, TOO... PUFF. THANKS, MR. QUEEN... THEY ALL BENEFIT FROM HER WILL.
I KNOW. BUT AS LONG AS THAT SUICIDE STANDS, THAT'S THE BEST WE CAN DO.
MAYBE IF WE GO OVER THE FACTS AGAIN...
WITHOUT EVIDENCE, THAT'S ONLY SO MUCH SMOKE, LIEUTENANT.
THE FACTS ARE WHAT THEY ARE GABE...


...WHAT WE NEED ARE SOME NEW FACTS.
MISS MAYS, MAY I SPEAK TO YOU?
?
IT'S SUICIDE, SON, PLAIN AND SIMPLE! AND BESIDES, I CAN'T SPARE THE MEN FOR YOUR PLAN!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO, DAD, JUST ANNOUNCE IT! I'LL DO THE REST!
INSPECTOR QUEEN, YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO OUST US FROM OUR HOME!
IT'S ALSO A CRIME SCENE, DR. RUNE! THE CITY WILL PICK UP THE COST OF WHATEVER HOTEL YOU AND YOUR FAMILY CHOOSE TO STAY AT...
... BUT BEGINNING TOMORROW, WE'RE NOT LEAVING THIS PLACE UNTIL WE FIND HOW YOUR WIFE WAS MURDERED. YOU SEARCHED THEIR SUITCASES, BLISS?
NOTHING SUSPICIOUS IN THERE, INSPECTOR.
I'M SORRY, DOCTOR, BUT WE'RE ALL LOOKING FOR THE SAME THING-- AN ANSWER TO YOUR WIFE'S DEATH.
IF NORAGA CAUSED MARGARET TO TAKE HER LIFE, HE IS BEYOND ANY PUNISHMENT YOU CAN INFLICT, INSPECTOR.
THEY'RE GONE, ELLERY. I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
DON'T WORRY, DAD, I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

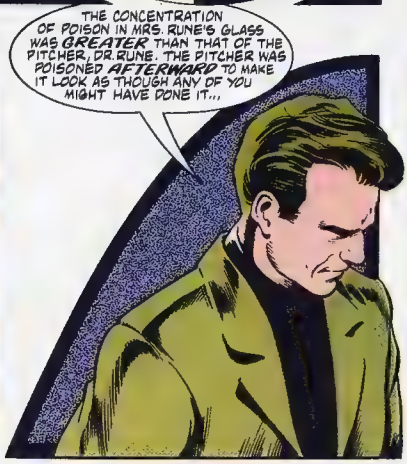

THE EQUIPMENT'S ON THE WAY, MR. QUEEN. ARE WE GOING TO SEARCH THE APARTMENT?
NO, MISS MAYS--WE'RE GOING TO LET THE KILLER DO OUR SEARCHING FOR US.
DAYDREAM BELIEVER TO HOMECOMING QUEEN. I'M IN THE HALL BY THE BEDROOMS; ALL'S QUIET. COME IN, HOMECOMING QUEEN.
GABE, STOP THAT.
...THIS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS, YOU KNOW.
I KNOW, HONEY. I JUST THOUGHT I'D--
HEY, I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING.
GABE, IF THIS IS A JOKE...
IT'S NOT. I THINK THERE'S SOMEONE--
HE'S HERE!
POOF!
STOP--!
BANNG
STOP HIM!

ZING
SPWEEE


HE WAS TRYING TO STEAL THOSE BLINDFOLDS THE RUNES WEAR--I GUESS HE DROPPED THESE WHEN I GRABBED HIS MASK...
HE REPLACED IT WITH THE THIRD BLINDFOLD; I COULDN'T GET A GLIMPSE OF HIS FACE.


THESE REMAINING BLINDFOLDS ARE OPAQUE. BUT HE WAS WEARING THE THIRD? EVEN OVER HIS EYES? GABE, DON'T YOU SEE WHAT THAT MEANS?
YEAH...YEAH, I THINK I DO...
CHALLENGE TO THE READER:
ELLERY QUEEN AND I KNOW WHO THE KILLER IS--BUT DO YOU?
THE ANSWER'S RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES--AND THE KILLER'S, AS WELL.

YOUR FAITH IN MRS. RUNE HAS BEEN CONFIRMED. SHE DIDN'T COMMIT SUICIDE, NOR WAS SHE A KILLER. TONY RUNE WAS HER ATTEMPTED POISONER.
THAT CANNOT BE.


THE CONCENTRATION OF POISON IN MRS. RUNE'S GLASS WAS GREATER THAN THAT OF THE PITCHER, DR. RUNE. THE PITCHER WAS POISONED AFTERWARD TO MAKE IT LOOK AS THOUGH ANY OF YOU MIGHT HAVE DONE IT...

...WE MAY NEVER KNOW WHY TONY WANTED HIS MOTHER DEAD, BUT IT GAVE THE TRUE KILLER THE IDEA TO FRAME MRS. RUNE BY PLANTING THE CROSSBOW.
HE WANTED US TO PIN THAT ON MRS. RUNE, AND WE DID...
...AND THE KILLER WENT AHEAD WITH HIS PLAN TO MURDER MRS. RUNE, FEIGNING HER SUICIDE. BUT LATER, WE WENT TO GREAT RISK TO TRY TO STEAL THE THREE BLINDFOLDS USED BY THE SUSPECTS.
THESE TWO ARE OPAQUE, BUT THE THIRD WASN'T A BLINDFOLD AT ALL...
...BUT WAS PROBABLY MADE OF SOME GAUZE-LIKE MATERIAL THE KILLER USED IT AS A MASK LAST NIGHT, PROVING IT COULD BE SEEN THROUGH!
HE STOLE IT BECAUSE IT WAS A CLUE.
HOW, ELLERY?
IS VISION REQUIRED FOR EXERCISES IN DANCE OR THE MARTIAL ARTS? NO... BUT VISION IS REQUIRED FOR SHARPSHOOTING.
YOU'RE NO "ZEN ARCHER," DR. RUNE, THAT WAS MERELY A STUNT TO IMPRESS YOUR AUDIENCE. YOU'RE AN EXPERT SHARPSHOOTER -- A SKILL REQUIRED BY THE KILLER!
NO, QUEEN! SOMEONE ELSE--
ARIEL IS LACKING AN EYE, AND ERGO THE DEPTH PERCEPTION REQUIRED BY A MARKSMAN! HOLLIS'S ATAXIA PREVENTS HIM FROM SHARPSHOOTING!
FIRST YOU TYPED THE NOTE ON YOUR WIFE'S TYPEWRITER...

"...AND LATER SLIPPED IT INTO HER ROBE, BEFORE SHE PUT IT ON, WITH HER GLOVES. YOU WORE THEM WHEN YOU FIRED A BLANK INTO THE SIDE OF HER HELMET.
"IT LEFT A POWDER BURN WHICH WOULD BE ALMOST INVISIBLE AT NIGHT, ON THE BLACK LACQUER SURFACE.
"WHEN YOUR WIFE PUT ON HER HELMET AND ROBE AND WENT INTO HER MEDITATION TENT, YOU WAITED UNTIL SHE FOUND THE NOTE.
"THEN YOU SHOT HER AIMING DEAD CENTER FOR THE POWDER BURN...
...AND TOSSED THE GUN NEXT TO HER BODY. THE PERFECT CRIME--ALMOST.
I REFUTE THESE RIDICULOUS ACCUSATIONS. I--
"ALMOST"?
I DON'T IMAGINE YOU WORE GLOVES TO FIRE THAT FATAL SHOT--THEY MIGHT HAMPER YOUR SKILL. THE POWDER RESIDUE ON YOUR HANDS WILL BE PROSECUTION EXHIBIT A.
...HAD YOUR ASSOCIATE NOT LAIN THE INITIAL POISONING AT THE FEET OF MY WIFE, EXACTLY AS I PLANNED, I COULD NOT HAVE CONTINUED!
MY FAILURE IS NOT WITHOUT SOME SUCCOR, QUEEN...
THE GUILT IS HIS, AS WELL AS MINE!

"THANK YOU FOR COMING, MR. QUEEN."
...HE'S VERY DEPRESSED. HE WON'T EAT, AND HE HASN'T SLEPT ALL NIGHT.
LET ME TALK TO HIM.
HELLO, GABE. MISS MAYS TELLS ME YOU'RE IN A PRETTY BAD STATE.
WOULDN'T YOU BE? I JUMPED THROUGH RUNE'S HOOPS LIKE A GOOD LITTLE DOG...
...AND VIRTUALLY HELPED HIM MURDER HIS WIFE.
...BUT EVEN IF HE HAD, HE WOULD STILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS WIFE'S DEATH. CONTRARY TO HIS TEACHINGS, HE HAS TO TAKE THE BLAME FOR HIS ACTIONS.
GABE, STOP THIS. RUNE WOULD HAVE MADE THE CASE AGAINST HIS WIFE SOMEHOW, IF YOU HADN'T. HE CAME TO ME, REMEMBER? HE WAS PLANNING ON USING ME AS HIS PAWN...
I'M GOING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING A VERY WISE MAN ONCE TOLD ME:
"THE WORK YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO DO IS OF GREAT SOCIAL VALUE.
"YOU MUST CONTINUE."
END

from the desk of Jennifer Mays

the MAZE AGENTS

3622 Jacob Street,
Wheeling, WV 26003

IT WAS SIXTY YEARS AGO TODAY...

In Which Facts Of Some Significance Are Disclosed

In 1928, *McClure's* Magazine -- a now-extinct but then-prestigious publication -- and the publishing house of Frederick A. Stokes pooled their efforts and announced a competition for the best detective novel, the price to be $7,500.00 (not bad money now, and terrific money then).

Two cousins in their mid-twenties -- themselves detective story fans who had made halting attempts to plot a whodunit when much younger -- decided to enter the contest, and worked in their spare time throughout the fall of 1928 to complete their manuscript before the December 31, 1928 deadline. A requirement of the contest was that all entries be submitted under pseudonyms, and the cousins, aware that many readers retained the name of their favorite detective far longer than they did the author of the story, chose the same name for their by-line as for their detective: Ellery Queen.

The cousins -- Manfred B. Lee and Frederic Dannay -- won the contest, only to have *McClure's* Magazine go out of business before the prize money could be awarded. The contest was taken over by *Smart Set* Magazine, who decided to award the price to another entrant.

However, Stokes liked the novel well enough to publish it anyway (at a substantially reduced advance) and thus *The Roman Hat Mystery* was born, and Ellery Queen, author and detective, made his (their?) joint debut on August 15, 1929.

The active career of the Queen cousins spanned the next several decades as thirty-four more novels bearing the name of Ellery Queen appeared, along with several volumes of short stories.

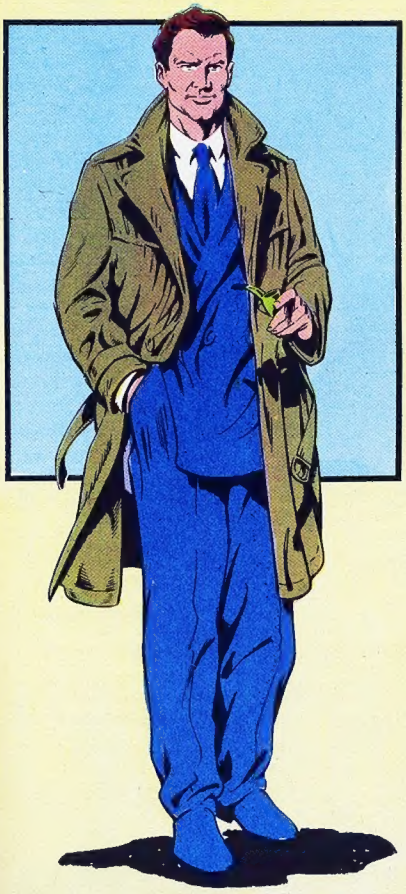
In 1941, *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, the editorial brainchild of Frederic Dannay, appeared, creating a new high water mark for quality in the mystery magazine. The name of Ellery Queen became virtually a pseudonym for "whodunit," and the character appeared in motion pictures, a long-running radio show, three television programs, a jigsaw puzzle, and several comic book series.

The influence Queen has had on the mystery genre -- both as writer and editor -- is incalculable.

I speak from first-hand experience, for I am a detective story writer because I was so struck, at age fifteen, by *The Roman Hat Mystery* that I wanted to write whodunits of my own. I eventually succeeded, in 1973, in selling my first professional fiction to *EQMM*, resulting in a letter from Frederic Dannay that hangs proudly in my office.

Lee and Dannay had been avid Sherlock Holmes fans in their formative years, and a later E.Q. novel, *A Study In Terror*, not only novelizes the Sherlock Holmes film of the same name, but includes a plotline in which Ellery Queen is able to match wits with the immortal sleuth of Baker Street.

It was in that spirit of acknowledged influences, of attempting to repay an unpayable debt, that I obtained the rights to place Ellery Queen in an issue of ***THE MAZE AGENCY***. (And thanks to Joshua Bilmes, of the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, for his aid in that area.) Having Jennifer Mays and Gabriel Webb meet E.Q. would almost be like meeting him myself.



Thus "The English Channeler Mystery," the first new Ellery Queen story in fourteen years.

If you are an Ellery Queen fan, I hope you enjoy it, and the deliberate echoes of past Queen conundrums.

If you are not, I envy you, for you have yet to enter the world of Ellery Queen, a world which is bound by the rules of relentless logic, and yet -- in a paradox worthy of G.K. Chesterton -- a world in which anything can happen.

I hope you will dive into the pool of novels and short stories awaiting you as eagerly as I did, twenty-two years ago; a body of work that seemed inexhaustible at the time, yet one I somehow exhausted in the seeming wink of an eye.

I can put it no better than Rex Stout, mystery author and creator of Nero Wolfe and Tecumseh Fox: "Ellery Queen has encircled the globe, and that is one of the reasons I am glad I am on it."

-- Mike W. Barr
September, 1989

To the memory of

Frederic Dannay
(1905 - 1982)
and
Manfred B. Lee
(1905 - 1971),

"Ellery Queen"

By
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ADAM HUGHES
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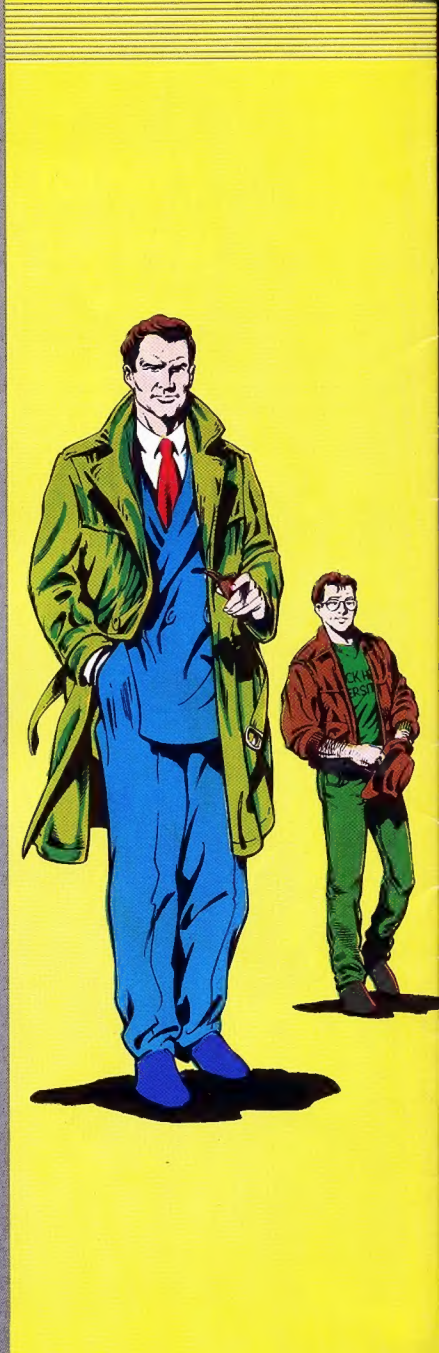
Meet New York's prettiest detective, *Jennifer Mays* of The Maze Agency, and true crime writer *Gabriel Webb*. Join them in a fair-play whodunit teaming them with Frederic Dannay & Manfred B. Lee's *Ellery Queen* -- for the first new story in 14 years featuring the famous fictional detective!

LAST ISSUE: Gabe and Jennifer spent part of a lovely, quiet weekend catching up on some personal time. But Gabe's downstairs neighbor was murdered -- and the killer nearly framed Gabe for the crime!

THIS ISSUE: In "The English Channeler Mystery," witness Gabe, Jennifer, and famous sleuth Ellery Queen stalk a killer who moves through sand without a clue -- and who has been dead for 10,000 years! Margaret Chalmers-Rune claims that she can channel the spirit of *Noraga*, whose body "died 10 centuries ago when the seas swallowed Atlantis," but Margaret is poisoned after delivering an ominous message...and her husband asks Ellery Queen to solve the case. Meanwhile, her stepson and daughter have engaged Jennifer and Gabe. As the bodies pile up, Gabe and Ellery both try to deduce the identity of the killer. Who will solve the crime first?

The 60th Anniversary Celebration Of Ellery Queen!